WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Coconut disease in Orissa

2359. SHRI MAN MOHAN SAMAL:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that coconut crop in Orissa has been facing threat of mite in coastal districts, where about 70 per cent of the crop has been affected, as reported in The Indian Express dated the 10th September, 2002;

(b) whether Government are also aware that fund crunch has been holding preventive measures, as the Central assistance through Coconut Development Board is awaited; and

(c) if so, whether the Central assistance has since been released; if not, by when it would be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. The incidence of coconut mite was reported in some parts of coastal districts of Orissa. As per the survey conducted by the State Department of Horticulture during July, 2002, around 2.41 lakh palms are infested by mite.

(b) and (c) After the report of incidence of coconut mite in Orissa in 2001, Coconut Development Board immediately released an amount of Rs. 16.00 lakhs during 2001-2002 under its Integrated Pest Management Programme for carrying out prophylactic spray against the pest covering two lakh palms to prevent further spread of the pest.

Storage facility for onions

2360. SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that no dedicated storage facility exists to prolong the life of onions in the country, by which the farmers are selling their onions at low prices; and

(b) if so, the details of steps Government propose to take to establish storage facilities for onions in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) Facility for extending shelf life of onions for 5-6 months exists. As per the estimates 16.50 lakh MT capacity ventilated storages are available. The Government of India through National Horticulture Board (NHB) is implementing a scheme "Capital Investment Subsidy Scheme for Construction/Expansion/ Modernisation of Cold Storage and Storages for Horticulture Produce". Under the scheme, back-ended capital investment subsidy is provided @ 25% of the project cost subject to a maximum subsidy of Rs. 500/- per MT for onion storages. The Government has also sanctioned a pilot project for the cold storage of onions at a total cost of Rs. 2.50 crores. Besides, National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and National Horticultural Research and Development Foundation (NHRDF) are also promoting the storage of onions by providing technical and financial assistance.

Doubling the foodgrains production

2361. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have drawn up an ambitious plan to double the foodgrains production in ten years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what are the crops indentified under the scheme; and

(d) the subsidies and other fiscal incentives proposed under the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) No, Sir. There is no proposal to double the foodgrains production in ten years.

(b) to (d) Questions do not arise.